

Reviews – Polemics

KATARZYNA SMĘDZIK-AMBROŻY

Roman Sass:
POTENCJAŁ PRODUKCYJNY INDYWIDUALNYCH
GOSPODARSTW ROLNYCH W PODREGIONIE BYDGOSKIM
A ICH EFEKTYWNOŚĆ PRZED I PO AKCESJI
DO UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ
(PRODUCTION POTENTIAL OF INDIVIDUAL FARMS
IN THE BYDGOSZCZ SUBREGION AND THEIR EFFICIENCY
BEFORE AND AFTER ACCESSION OF POLAND
TO THE EUROPEAN UNION)

Wydawnictwo Kujawsko-Pomorskiej Szkoły Wyższej w Bydgoszczy,
Bydgoszcz 2019, 366 pp.
ISBN: 978-83-65744-11-1.

The reviewed book deals with an extremely important and current problem of the impact of investment processes on farms on their efficiency and production potential, based on the experience of farms from the Bydgoszcz subregion. It is extensive and, consists of an introduction, seven substantive chapters, a summary, a bibliography, a list of tables and drawings and an annex.

In his investigations the author determined the impact of the amount of investment outlays and the direction of investment on the production potential and economic results of farms up to the twenty-year time range of research (1996-2015). It also successfully determined the impact of Poland's accession to the EU on investment processes on farms in Poland. At the same time, it made it possible to formulate recommendations on the impact of farm support programmes and mechanisms of the EU's common agricultural

policy on the competitive position of the agricultural sector in Poland. The argument undoubtedly enriches the author's expert approach to the conducted considerations.

The investigation structure is accurate and appropriate to determine the impact of resource, institutional conditions resulting from the EU's common agricultural and market policy on investment processes of farms. It is these issues that constitute the author's contribution to the development of economics, filling the gap in this field. The problem of the impact of resource and institutional conditions on the competitive position of the agricultural sector, as well as on its production potential and efficiency, although it is not entirely new, raises many doubts and reservations raised by representatives of very different currents in economics. The author set himself an uneasy and ambitious task to assess the impact of quantitative and qualitative factors, e.g. human capital, the use of advisory services, or farm development perspectives on their technical, financial and resource efficiency.

The work begins with an introduction. The author presented in it the motives for dealing with research issues and the main purpose of the research, which was **“determining the impact of the amount of investment outlays, their complexity and direction of activity on the production potential and economic results of farms in the Bydgoszcz subregion”**. This goal is very important, understandable and at the same time ambitious. The main goal is complemented by research tasks that are compatible with it and complement the considerations and more accurately characterize the research problem. The correct formulation of five research hypotheses also contributed to solving the research problem:

1. accession to the European Union and the use of funds under the CAP mechanisms resulted in an improvement in the technical efficiency of farms;
2. the area of land used was the basic determinant of the efficiency and competitiveness of farms;
3. CAP price and regulatory determinants differentiated the economic situation of agricultural holdings to a greater extent than production results;
4. the income of the researched farms depended mainly on resource and not efficiency factors;
5. qualitative rather than quantitative factors had a greater impact on the technical and financial efficiency of the surveyed farms.

It should be stated that research hypotheses formulated in this way are logically linked to the main goal. In this part of the book, the author also presents sources of primary and secondary information and listed the research methods used. The introduction should be included in the strengths of the dissertation. The reader is familiar with the issue and the author's intentions have been clearly presented. The set goal, tasks and research hypotheses are correct, substantively right and quantifiable.

The first chapter is entitled: *Support for the modernization of agricultural holdings before and after accession to the European Union*. It concerns interventionism in agriculture and EU programmes that stimulated investment processes on farms. The author devoted the second and third chapter to determining the impact of investment outlays and the area of researched farms on their production potential. Chapter four provides comprehensive technical performance and scale characteristics for the analyzed farms. The fifth and sixth chapters set out the factors, determine the direction of their impact and the strength of

impact on technical, financial and scale efficiency of farms in the Bydgoszcz subregion. The culmination of the research is the seventh chapter, in which the results of analyzes carried out in previous chapters were extrapolated. The work ends with a summary. The scientific discourse conducted by the author in this work is multithreaded. Interesting syntheses deserving praise are the summaries of the considerations provided in each chapter.

The reviewed book is the author's contribution to learning in the field of research methods applied and used to assess the impact of institutional, resource and quality factors on the production potential and efficiency of farms. The choice of the topic is relevant and substantively justified. The problems of the impact of institutional factors (subsidies of a different nature for the agricultural sector under the CAP), resource and quality (e.g. quality of farm management and its development perspectives) on agricultural efficiency is important both from the point of view of developing the theory and also because of the application values. The latter refer to current and future changes that take place in agricultural policy, especially of the European Union countries and relate to challenges related to the development of competitiveness of European agriculture (including Polish). Exploring this thread is important for formulating conclusions and recommendations in the field of agricultural policy.

In addition, I consider the following components to be the author's advantages and research achievements presented in the reviewed monograph:

1. proving a reduction in the diversity of investment outlays between farms with the largest and smallest investments after Poland's accession to the EU relative to previous years;
2. indication that the size of investment outlays is a decisive factor for area changes;
3. justification that for increasing income in agriculture (especially in large area farms) it is important to improve efficiency and the human factor, and not only the institutional environment and the subsidies resulting for the agricultural sector;
4. demonstration that: an increase in the amount of investment outlays before and after accession, an increase in the usable area of land before accession, an increase in production intensity (direct costs per hectare), an increase in equity after accession, an increase in debt of assets improve the efficiency of farms;
5. showing that the diversity of scale efficiency in the analyzed farms was greater than the technical efficiency;
6. proving that subsidies weaken farm efficiency;
7. proof that its area has a leading role in shaping farm income;
8. indication that farms of over 80 ha have the greatest development opportunities in Poland;
9. proving that investment financing from national support measures and common agricultural policy mechanisms has contributed to the property and economic polarization of farms;
10. showing that the increase in the area of farms was much larger in the pre-accession period than after Poland's accession to the EU;
11. proving that market relations had a far greater impact on efficiency in good agricultural times;
12. showing that the highest efficiency in the years 1996-2015 was achieved by farms with the largest investments and specializing in field crops.

The work is well-documented and based on extensive literature comprising 452 articles and monographs supplemented with 11 source and statistical materials as well as legal acts. The author has demonstrated the ability to use numerous publications and the ability to synthesize knowledge and properly present the theoretical and empirical findings to date. The monograph's advantage is also its comprehensiveness and multidimensional approach to the problem. The author proved the correctness of the scientific workshop in the process of formulating the assumptions of the research process, analysis and then inference based on the conducted investigations. The monograph by dr hab. Roman Sass *Production potential of individual farms in the Bydgoszcz subregion and their efficiency before and after accession of Poland to the European Union* is a valuable study. It confirms the scientific advancement of its author and is a contribution to economic sciences. It has a high substantive value, and the obtained results and content of individual chapters constitute a logical whole.

Accepted for print: 13.03.2020.

Unless stated otherwise all the materials on the website are available under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license.
Some rights reserved to the Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics – National Research Institute.

